

Playlists

We do want to encourage performance and seek local opportunities that feature the Classical Guitar. The key point about performing is that it is so practised that you can do it 'in your sleep' firstly because it's perfect and there are no or few mistakes (or they can be covered up very successfully) and secondly that the entire performance is more enjoyable for the performer when it's perfect.

How many people have 3 to 5 hours practise time a day? Very few can guarantee this much time every day yet it is this much time that is required in order to play the so-called impressive pieces that litter the contemporary catalogue of the Classical guitar repertoire. Does this mean that without 3 to 5 hours a day performance becomes impossible? Stories of 40 minutes a day will suffice come from people who already played at a very high level for quite a while, but for those who have not achieved this level 40 minutes will not enable them to play La Maya de Goya or Choros Number 1, or Rodrigo's Fandango with its massive stretches. Does this mean therefore, that anyone who has not achieved the requisite level has to abandon the aspiration of performance altogether?

Clearly this is nonsense as there are very many pieces which are of high musical quality, that can look impressive to an audience most of whom do not play a guitar (so how would they know what is easy and what is hard and if they do play why should they care, it's the music that is important) yet do not require the vast amounts of practise time needed. In any case some Classical Guitarists have no aspiration to play the 'impressive' pieces or to become that adept that those pieces can be played 'in their sleep'.

Gorseinon Guitar's (GG) processes are about identifying pieces and building complete Playlists that are graded not just exercises but a group of pieces of high musical quality that satisfy the criteria of entire performances. Of course this also has to be about what the performer wants to play but it is GG's function to explore pieces and build viable Playlists; what does viable mean?

The beginning pieces of a performance have the function of warming up both the audience and the performer. They introduce the audience to the general sound but don't require too much concentration because as the performance moves on concentration increases; It's also a way of making the audience quieter if that is what is required. Sometimes you just want to provide background music for people milling around so audience concentration is not really required. It's at this point when the first key piece is played a piece that sharpens up the audience and makes them go wow! Keeping up this wow factor is tiring both for the audience's concentration and possibly the performer; time to insert a more unusual piece a kind of performance sidestep.

Well this is just a suggestion as to how the performance as a whole can be structured but you can see how this generally works. What is viable is what is subject to some kind of rationale for the structure and this is dependent on the

context of the performance. For example if you are providing music for a art gallery showing paintings people will be walking around and only sometimes be paying attention. We figure about 20 pieces per playlist having some kind of progression, i.e. a rationale as to which piece first, which second and so on. In some cases exercises are of good musical quality because that was the point of them. By making a piece good music you ensured that it would get played and have some didactic point as the payoff.

So what pieces are we looking for and where do we get them?

We keep them below around grade 3 or 4 and in many ways what propels a piece into those grades are one or two harder stretches (which can be changed) or a bar that can prove challenging. If we like a piece but need to change it we will. Where duets, trios etc are concerned each participant must have something decent to play not just a kind of servitude to one player who shines; Classical Guitar fodder is pointless.

We get a lot from the Net but also we're prepared to arrange music ourselves and in fact much of GG is involved in that and also involved in discussions about scorewriting software and that means TAB as well not just ordinary notation in fact we may go further and entertain notions of sequencers like Ableton Push. A list of scorewriting software taken from Wiki is on GG's website and our intention is to go through every single one of them and evaluate them on an ongoing basis. Some of them are free, some very expensive but we will look at them all and try and keep up to date on what is available.

Part of the process of GG is also about song accompaniments which sometimes standalone, and support for lyricists who need help in writing music and providing a recording of their songs. What happens is that music is written to go with their lyrics, but the Classical Guitar is featured as the accompaniment instrument although this may not always be appropriate but initially that's the accompaniment medium.

We do want to entertain the uploading of tracks to appropriate sites like Soundcloud or the FreeMusicArchive but essentially we also want to entertain discussions about how music is marketed and how that has changed over the last few decades and how we can help local people to meet these changes and be able to market their own music.

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